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AUTHOR	Haas, Mary E.
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ABSTRACT

This lesson plan for instruction in geography addresses three social studies standards (People, Places and Environments; Culture; Civic Ideals and Values) and seven geography standards (development of mental maps; physical and human characteristics of places; people create regions to interpret the earth's complexity; patterns and networks of economic interdependence; how human actions modify the physical environment; how physical systems affect human systems; use geography to interpret present and plan for future). The lesson plan includes materials needed, a rationale, seven student objectives, detailed teaching procedures, and assessment guidelines. The lesson can be adapted to younger or older students. The lesson uses geography to illustrate differences among peoples, particularly how terrain and available resources influence cultures. Students match pictures with physical location on a map, classify as either physical or human geography, predict uses and changes of landscapes, and develop a rationale of land usage while identifying the conflicting values and arguments in decisions to preserve or change an area. Contains two handouts. (BT)

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How can teaching geography contribute to the understanding of the common good?

Presentation for 1999 meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies

Mary E. Haas
West Virginia University
maryhaas@aol.com

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Standards:

Social studies standards addressed: People, Places and Environments; Culture; Civic ideals and values.

Geographic standards addressed include: 2. Development of mental maps; 4. Physical and human characteristics of places; 5. People create regions to interpret the earth's complexity; 11. Patterns and networks of economic interdependence; 14. How human actions modify the physical environment; 15. How physical systems affect human systems; 18. Use geography to interpret present and plan for future.

Materials:

Pictures placed in plastic envelopes or mounted on construction paper making them the same size. Outline map of the U. S. string and large heads tacks or pins for bulletin board. Paper for drawing map.

Rationale:

United we stand divided we fall. We must all hang together or surely we will all hang separately. Share the risk. No person is an island. All of these sayings are reminders that of the fact that people progress together through community as a result cooperation and care for others. Interdependence has always been a fact of life for humans who are born helpless and who are social beings living in a world of specialized individuals and places that is becoming more interdependent.

Do your own thing. You can't make me do anything. Have been heard much in American society in recent years. Individualism and diversity are important concepts and values important in the American character. People have unique characteristics and even identical twins seek some way to be different from their twin and have a unique identity. The causes of differences are many, and geography provides a way to look at the differences and to see them as good. Geography also helps to understand that diversity can contribute to a better whole. People can benefit by coming together and not letting

differences separate people from what might be a good solution for many when they examine the commonly held underlying needs and the really important wants of people.

Objectives:

1. Given pictures of various places in the U. S. students will correctly predict the locations physical region or state shown in the picture.

2. Students identify the resources in the pictures classifying them as elements of physical or human geography.

3. Students identify changes in landscapes and attribute the changes to natural or human causes.

4. Given information about the current trends in the population of the world and the U. S., students will predict additional possible changes in the landscapes.

5. Given a problem of deciding land usage, students will cooperatively work together to develop a rationale for using land and protecting places from human intervention and identify conflicting values and arguments people encounter when making the decision to preserve or change an area.

6. Students will explain if and how the idea of common good relates the their rationale for land usage.

7. Students locate places on maps using exact location and relative location descriptions, classify scenes by common characteristics, form and revise conclusions based upon facts and reasoning, examine problems from various viewpoints, and make decisions they believe are for the common good.

Procedures:

Exploratory Introduction:

1. Students draw a map of the U. S. and label with words or symbols what they know about the U. S.

2. Students explain their maps to another student and display their maps by holding them up in front of their chests.

3. Teacher helps the students to identify things they all have shown by asking students whose drawnings have such common characteristics as: the shape of U.S., east coast, west coast, and names of states to stand in groups. Count the number of children in the group showing the same characteristic.

4. Help the children identify those areas where they have no data or only a few people included with details. Ask the children to speculate why they do

not know this area. Are there any common areas where large numbers of the students lack information?

Lesson development:

5. Distribute picture of the U. S. or have students select them.

6. Students tell what they think is important about the picture, what they like or why they selected it. (This can be done is small groups which a reporter summarizes and reports to the class. Students come forward and hold up their pictures so everyone can see all of the pictures.)

7. Note if the students selected their own questions, which ones selected pictures of the natural environment and which show human environments.

8. Students learn where their pictures were taken and place them around a map of the U. S. a piece of yarn is attached to the picture and to the location on the map.

9. Students are asked to describe the characteristics of pictures in locations that are near one another. Teacher asks: " What words describe all of these pictures?" Teacher records the words grouping them by location. Use the lists to practice locating places by asking the children which list describes the location of a particular place or pointing to a location that is described by the words on the lists. Teachers introduce traditional names (Great Plains, Rocky Mountains) of the physical regions or state regions at this point.

10. Students study the bulletin board. The teacher removes the ends of the yarn from the maps and small groups of students try to replace 5 or 6 of the ends at the correct locations. The entire class then views the newly reconstructed bulletin board. Using the descriptive word lists decide if the strings have been correctly replaced. (Length of the strings will help in the correct replacements.)

11. Assessment and additional practice: Compare different regions of the country by playing a game that describes the appearance of an area and students predict where the areas is in the U. S. Alternatively, new pictures are shown and students predict where the pictures was taken and give their reasons for the choice.

12. Students write to various state tourist departments and obtain a tourist booklet. When the materials arrive, students who wrote to states from the same region, look at the pictures in the booklets and see if the tourist book shows scenes similar to the ones they have on their bulletin board. Identify what additional types of scenes are shown in the tourist booklet that people in the state think other Americans should see? Discuss: Why the natives of the states think people should see these additional places? Groups make another list of words that they now think better describes their region. Discuss: Why people in an area might see their region differently from those who live in another area of the country.

13. Give special attention to the people in the booklets looking for common elements in the culture of the region and for diversity of these people.

Compare these people to those in your area on dress, recreation, jobs, and ethnic and racial mixtures. Also note common characteristics among the people in a region.

Lesson closure for younger students:

At this point in the lesson teacher helps class make and record conclusions about both the physical and cultural diversity of the U. S. Ask: What would the U. S. be missing if we had no (Rocky Mountains, not Great Plains, no coastal plains, no Great Lakes regions or name particular states such as Arizona, Florida)? Help the students see that without mountains there might not be snow fields that melt and form rivers or at least long rivers, timber and other natural resources or products and raw materials. Ask: If we didn't have timber would we still have houses? What would they look like? Are there any hints in the materials we got from the state tourist agencies? Do people far away from a region benefit from the existence of that region? If there is a natural disaster in a region, why do people in other parts of the U. S. help the people there? Why do they allow the government to give these people extra money? Should the people who live in the region be the only ones to help each other? Should the people who live in the region be the only ones to decide what goes on there and how the people use their land? Why, Why not? When do people living in another part of the country have the right to tell you what to do with your land?

Development of generalizations on people impacting the earth:

14. Do people always use their land in the same ways? To help prompt students they teacher might use pictures again. Place students into group and give them several pictures. Ask the students to perform specific classifications such as: 1. place all pictures together that show change has happened there 2. place all pictures together that show changes were made by people,
Ask: If people did not bring about the change in the picture what did?

15. Have the students pick two pictures and predict how differently that picture might look when they are adults. Who in your group thinks this change will be for the better? Who thinks it will not be a good or better change? Ask each group to explain the reason for their conclusion. Share their ideas with the entire class. What do the other students think of these changes? Is there anything that can stop the changes from happening?

Closure for older students/those looking at the impact of people:

16. Older students take part in a role play project in which they decide how to use a piece of land. (The directions and assignment forms attached to the lesson are from the ERIC publication ED354 157 " Forest, Land, And Water: Understanding Our Natural Resources A Teachers Guide" a publication funded by a grant from the U. S. Forest Services.)

17. In debriefing the project examine such questions as: What viewpoints were expressed and in conflict? How were problems solved? Did everyone agree to the solution? How do you think the people will act toward one another when they see each other again? Was our solution realistic? Can people come together and make choices that please the interests of various groups of people? How would you judge if the solution is a "good" solution? How can the idea of the "common good" be used as a criteria for making decisions on the use of the land?

Assessment:

1. Students correctly group pictures by physical features.

2. Students correctly locate regions of the U. S. and describe the major physical appearance of the regions.

3. Students give accurate example of how U. S. regions and the people living in various regions are interdependent.

4. Students identify multiple views and listen to the reasons people give for their views.

5. Students ask questions to clarify the views and reasoning of others.

6. Students are willing consider what the needs are for the entire group by compromising on their wants to provide for the needs of all people.

7. Students express interest in the appearance and life of people in areas of the U. S. that their orginal maps revealed were largely unknown to them.

STUDENT HANDOUT 5

Development Project Cards

1. Surface mine available coal. This action requires roads to be constructed. Include these on your diagram.

2. Harvest timber. This requires that roads be constructed. Locate these on the diagram.

3. Leave part of the area as wilderness and develop recreational use in the remaining parts. Be certain to include any buildings, roads or parking lots on your diagram.

4. Developing recreational use (you select the appropriate type(s)) requires entrance road and parking lot. Your ideas may also require other buildings or trails to make your ideas work. Show these on the diagram.

5. Provide area for hunting and fishing in proper seasons. These uses require an entrance road and parking. Show these on your diagram.

6. Develop part of the land into a recreational area of your choice and part into a commercial use of the natural resources. Be certain to include the roads, parking facilities and buildings on your diagram.

STUDENT HANDOUT 6

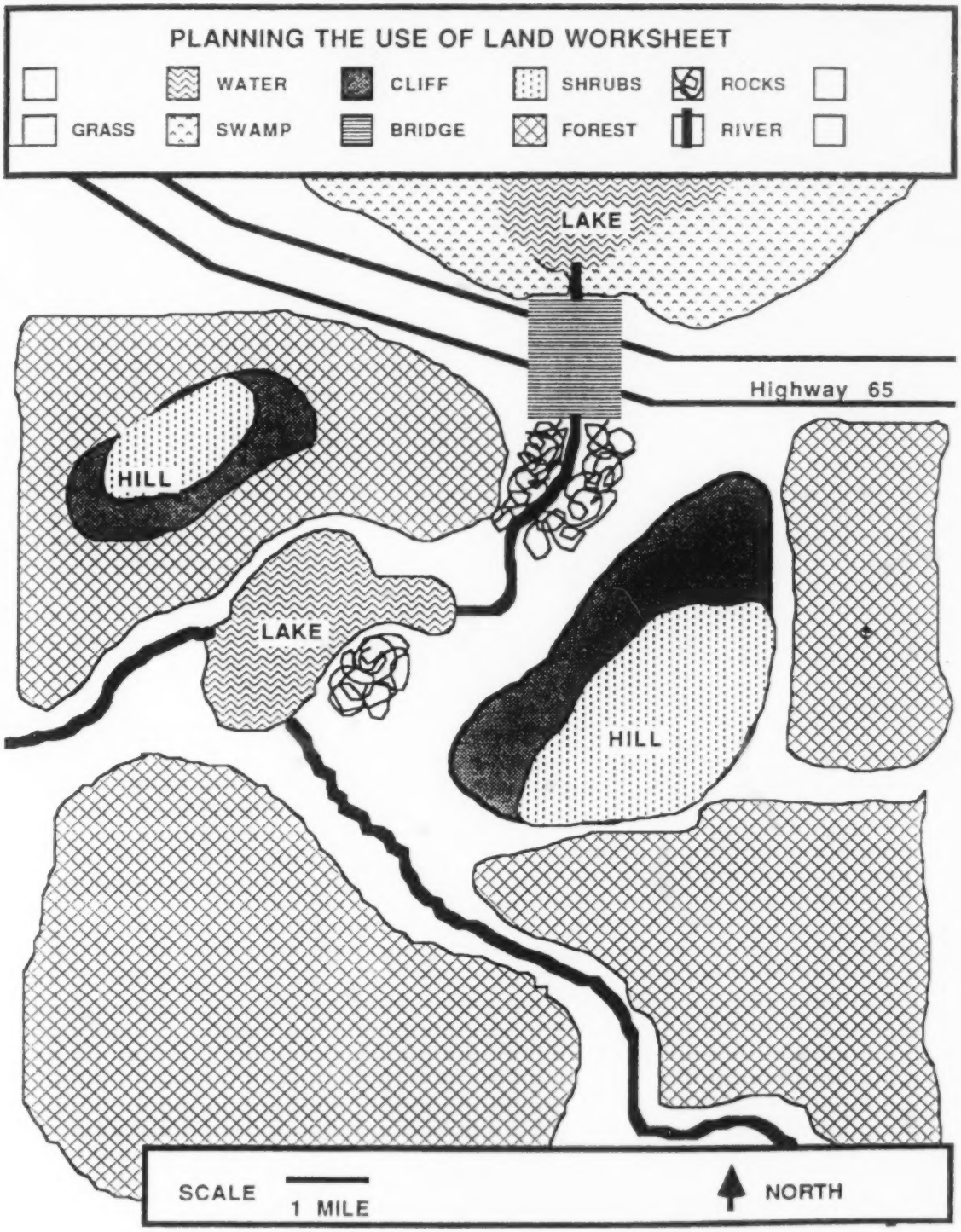
Planning the Use of Land

Below is a diagram of a piece of land. You are to decide how this land can be used. The legend tells what the symbols on the diagram represent. Notice that there is some extra space in the legend where you will add symbols that describe your choice for the use of different parts of the land. Draw the symbols in the legend and also on the diagram where you wish to locate your projects. Choose two of the following that are suggested. When you complete your planning map you will be asked to share it with the class and give reasons for your choices and the locations of projects.

The following projects have been suggested:

1. Surface mining of available coal. This action requires roads to be constructed. Include these on your diagram.
2. Harvesting timber requires that roads be constructed . Locate these on the diagram.
3. Leave an area as wilderness. This requires selling the idea to large numbers of people and eliminating traffic in the wilderness area.
4. Develop recreational use (you select the appropriate type(s)). This requires an entrance road and a parking lot. This may also require other buildings, trails, and an information center.
5. Provide an area for hunting and fishing in proper seasons. This requires an entrance road and parking.
6. Develop this area for a large shopping mall and for recreation. This may require leveling the hills, filling in the lake, building parking lots, a drainage system, and buildings.

See map on next page.


PLANNING THE USE OF LAND WORKSHEET
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